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ABSTRACT

Many college graduates who have not gone through the traditional teacher education process seek to become instructors in the public schools, particularly in areas where there exists a shortage of qualified teachers. This report offers a realistic alternative path of entry into teaching with clearly defined stages of development to attract such prospective candidates. Throughout the report, stress is placed on the development of teacher training coalitions composed of members from school districts, institutions of higher learning, regional education centers, social agencies, or private sector organizations. Because of the potentially diverse candidate pool, the concept of "The Professional Support Team" was developed to establish competencies as well as to guide and assess the beginning teacher's progress throughout the school year. It is expected that the alternative field-based proposal presented in this report will take its place beside the more traditional mode of teacher training, perhaps each benefitting from the other. Appendixes contain the charge to the State Internship Panel, a Minority Report by Marroantonio Lacatena, and a Supplemental Report by Edith A. Fulton. (JD)

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REPORT OF THE STATE COMMISSION ON ALTERNATIVE TEACHER CERTIFICATION

ED262021

Trenton, New Jersey
May, 1984

SP 026 633

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FORWARD

The Commission on Alternative Teacher Certification began its study with a fundamental premise in mind: the citizens of this state desire and are willing to support a high level of public school education for all its children. To achieve and maintain quality education requires above all a committed, knowledgeable and well-trained core of teachers. New Jersey, concomitant with every other state in the nation, is seriously concerned about the supply and the quality of future entrants into the profession of teaching.

The recently published Carnegie Foundation Report, The Condition of Teaching: A State By State Analysis, remarked cogently, "Never before in the nation's history has the calibre of those entering the teaching profession been as low as it is today ... This [is] true for every state in the union ... Teaching clearly is not attracting America's best minds." Simply stated: parents want the best teachers for their children, but too many parents want somebody else's children to be those teachers. Clearly, the problems associated with the relative lack of reward and recognition for teaching as a profession contributes significantly to its low estate.

In addition, however, to the aforementioned concerns, teaching has failed to attract outstanding candidates. Many college graduates, for a panoply of reasons, have chosen not to go through the traditional teacher education process. Yet, they seek to become instructors in our public schools. It was the charge of the Commission to prepare a realistic alternate path of entry with clearly defined stages of development to attract such prospective candidates.

A leitmotif throughout the report is the stress on the development of teacher training coalitions: school districts, institutions of higher learning, regional education centers, social agencies, and private sector organizations represent possible members of such coalitions. Because of the potentially diverse candidate pool, the Commission developed a unique concept, The Professional Support Team, to establish competencies as well as guide and assess the beginning teacher's progress throughout the school year.

It is the Commission's expectation that the alternative field-based proposal as presented in our report will take its place beside the more traditional mode of teacher training perhaps each benefitting from the other. We understand that we are advocating change; change can be difficult. However, whether change is to be perceived as a millstone or a milestone depends not on what potential the change brings to us, but instead on what potential we bring to the change.

Respectfully submitted,

Harry Jaroslaw
Chairperson

Introduction

The Commission on Alternative Teacher Certification was charged with designing the specific means by which professional knowledge and skills will be conveyed to provisionally certified teachers* through state-approved training programs in local school districts. The Commission was asked to develop its recommendations using as a foundation the essential knowledge and skill areas defined in the report of the Panel on the Preparation of Beginning Teachers (The Boyer Report). Copies of the Commission's charge and the Boyer Report are attached.

Several general themes emerged as the Commission discussed its task and these themes are important to an understanding of its specific recommendations. First, the training programs which will result from this study are intended to replace the so-called "emergency" system. The Commission supports the elimination of the emergency system and recognizes the need to provide school districts with an alternative which is structured in a way to attract outstanding personnel. Because district training programs will result in the certification of provisional teachers, these programs must

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*excluding teachers of the handicapped, bilingual/bicultural education and English as a second language.

conform to rigorous standards for professional preparation. Our recommendations therefore reflect an attempt to achieve a high level of professional integrity and quality. As a result, programs so designed may serve also as legitimate vehicles for attracting talented persons to the teaching profession from fields outside of education. Districts must meet the requirements we have outlined, and only these districts will be authorized to operate certification training programs. The standards we suggest must not be compromised in order to resolve problems caused by personnel shortages.

It is also our intention to encourage further the notion of partnerships and coalitions which was advanced in the Boyer Report (page 13). Local districts shall seek joint sponsorship and operation of their training programs with collegiate education faculties. College education faculty are viewed as the primary resource for conveying theoretical knowledge of children and adolescents, their individual characteristics, and their learning. Regional consortia of several districts represent additional means by which resources might be pooled and quality enhanced. Professional associations should also play an active part in the preparation process, especially by offering programs to help their members fulfill their respective roles as participants. True partnerships will depend upon the mutual efforts of those involved to surmount the obstacles which traditionally have inhibited such relationships from developing.

In addition, it is important that teachers acquire certain basic knowledge and skills before they assume full responsibility for a classroom, even though much valuable learning can result from actual experience. This applies equally to teachers at all levels, kindergarten through grade twelve.

Members of the Commission are unanimous in their view that the terms "intern" and "internship" do not accurately describe the teaching candidates or state-approved training programs referred to in this report. These terms are unfortunate in that they might suggest to parents and professional educators that the new teachers are less than adequate to assume full-time teaching responsibilities. On the contrary, our recommendations assure that provisional teachers will have met certain requirements before they take charge of a classroom and that their knowledge and abilities will be refined over the course of a year. We urge that terms such as "provisional teacher" and "state-approved district training program" be used instead.

The District Training Program

Each district wishing to hire provisional teachers must obtain state approval of its plan (see page 18) and must offer a program which meets the following requirements:

A. Phase I: Initial Training

The Commission considered the question of what training ought to be completed before the provisional teacher takes responsibility for full-time regular teaching. This question was divided into two

parts. First, what qualifications should a candidate for alternative certification possess? Second, what training activities and/or formal instruction should the candidate have received before entering the classroom? In addition, consideration was given to the ways in which districts should prepare themselves to receive a provisional teacher.

1. Qualifications

Before taking the state subject test and being offered employment, the provisional teaching candidate will be screened through a local interview process which must be thorough and focus on the evaluation of academic and experiential background and, in particular, on those personal/ethical qualities identified in the Boyer Report (pages 8-9) as critical to the profession of teaching. In order to be eligible to take the proposed state subject matter test, the candidate also must evidence the following:

a. A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university, except that in certain vocational and technical fields the degree is not required of those who demonstrate the equivalent in full-time work experience in a job related to the subject to be taught; and

b. At least 30 credit hours in the subject to be taught (in secondary fields), except that this 30-credit requirement can be waived in part or completely by the State Board of Examiners for those who demonstrate at least five years of full-time work experience since the date of the degree in a professional level job related to the subject to be taught. Elementary teaching candidates will be required to pass a general knowledge test and must present evidence of a baccalaureate degree and a 30-credit major in any field.

In addition, staff of the State Board of Examiners, in reviewing the transcripts and applications of those seeking to take the state subject matter test, should conduct an evaluation of the overall academic record and background of each candidate. The Secretary of the Board of Examiners has the right to ask the Board to reject the application of any candidate whose combined academic/experiential record is not judged adequate based on existing standards for teacher education graduates in New Jersey.

All candidates who meet the above criteria should be eligible to take the proposed state examination which allows entry to the alternate certification program. Because the proposed state test will serve as the initial screening mechanism,

a rigorous and valid test should be used and cutoff scores should be set high and maintained. Those who pass the state exam should be given a formal "notice of passage" which they can present while seeking employment in the schools.

2. Training Activities Before Assuming Full-Time Teaching Responsibilities

The training activities required for alternative certification candidates should consist of three components: preservice practice teaching, a concurrent seminar, and an orientation to the local district.

a. Preservice Practice

Each state-approved training program must provide an opportunity for the provisional teacher to work with students in a limited and controlled "laboratory" situation prior to being assigned full responsibility for a classroom. This element of the training of provisional teachers must involve a minimum of 20-30 days of work in a classroom under the direction of an experienced teacher and a certified supervisor. This practical experience should consume a portion of each of the 20-30 days and be integrated with a concurrent seminar. The purpose of

this preservice practice would be to introduce the six teaching skills areas outlined in the Boyer Report (page 9). The context of the experience would be determined by the local district in consultation with a college or university and would be approved by the State Board of Examiners. For example, it could be operated during the prior spring in cases where the provisional teacher is identified early; it could be conducted in a summer; or, if the provisional teacher is employed on short notice, it could be provided the first 20-30 days on the job.

b. Seminar

In the same time frame as the practice experience, the provisional teacher must participate in a concurrent seminar dealing with effective teaching, curriculum, classroom management, and child development as discussed in the Boyer Report. The child development component of the seminar should be focused on the age group the candidate will be teaching. The seminar can be offered by the local district, a consortium of local districts, a college or university or a coalition of institutions. The seminar may be offered for graduate credit assuming established higher education standards are met. It is intended that the seminar meet regularly during the

practice teaching experience, and that an integration of these two aspects be required. The State Department of Education is encouraged to provide coordination by identifying clusters of districts which are hiring provisional teachers and to organize regional seminars in partnership with colleges.

c. Orientation

Each district should also provide an orientation program designed to familiarize alternative candidates with the local district, its organization, its policies and its curriculum.

3. Preparation to Train a Provisional Teacher

The employment and training of a provisional teacher requires organization and preparation on the part of the district. Central to this task is the development of a prescriptive training plan (see page 18). As a part of this planning process, reading materials and other resources must be identified as accessible and the district must demonstrate that a certified experienced teacher has volunteered to assist with the training process. It is expected that there will be extra compensation for additional work by this teacher. In

addition, members of an internal support team must be identified. This team will include, at minimum, the school administrator, an experienced teacher, and a college faculty member. The team shall also include a curriculum supervisor in those districts employing such personnel; other districts must provide for comparable expertise on the team. The State Department of Education should provide orientation programs for support team members to familiarize them with their respective roles in the training program and with state certification evaluation forms, criteria and procedures.

It is essential that small districts with limited resources work together. The State Department of Education should identify districts in close proximity which wish to hire provisional teachers and assist them in coordinating their resources to meet the state requirements for a district training program. Each district must identify a program leader and these leaders will form a consortium coordination team.

B. Phase II - Intensive Support

Phase II of the program is to occur during the first 10 weeks after the provisional teacher begins a full-time teaching assignment. It may last longer depending on the progress and needs of the individual candidate. Its purpose is to continue the study which was

begun during the Phase I seminar and the refinement of teaching skills introduced in the initial practice experience. As in Phase I, emphasis must be placed on the practical integration of various aspects of the program so that knowledge acquired is applied by the provisional teacher to the refinement of skills.

The mechanism for accomplishing this integration is the Professional Support Team.. The concept of the Professional Support Team is central to the program recommended in that it allows an individualized approach to training provisional teachers. This team, ideally comprised of individuals who worked with the provisional teacher during Phase I, will consist at least of the school administrator, an experienced teacher, the curriculum supervisor (where available), and a college faculty member. The team may call upon other professionals to assist in the training process depending on the needs of the candidate. A major function of the team will be to develop and carry out a prescribed training plan for the individual provisional teacher which takes into account the provisional teacher's background, progress, and degree of success in the Phase I program.

Learning and skill development should continue in five areas during the Phase II program:

1. Student Assessment

Support team members should call upon any additional experienced teacher, curriculum supervisor or college faculty participant having special expertise in methods of comprehensive student assessment.

2. Learning Theory (including how the atypical student learns and how to motiviate)

Support team members could involve an additional college faculty participant and district special services personnel.

3. Curriculum

As outlined in the Boyer Report, study in this area should include lesson development, teaching strategies and, in particular, the curriculum to be taught by the provisional teacher. Emphasis should be placed on reading, writing, mathematics, and science in the elementary grades and on reading and writing in the subject field at the secondary level.

The Support Team could be supplemented in this most important aspect of study by additional teachers, college faculty,

private sector consultants, professional association institutes, and the Department of Education's Regional Curriculum Service Units.

4. Child Growth and Development

The Support Team could be expanded to include special services personnel, private sector professionals and community agency representatives.

5. The School as a Social Organization

The support team might be supplemented with additional college faculty and with school administrators.

Learning in the Phase II program will take place through a continuation of the seminar meetings begun in Phase I. These meetings could take the form of a college credit-bearing course(s) as long as the criteria for integration with experience and broad use of available support team resources are met. Certain topics (e.g. student assessment and learning theory) or aspects of topics lend themselves to being taught effectively through coursework, while others might be learned best through experience. Some combination of coursework and experiential training is desirable. Consortia of districts with the coordination of the State Department of Education could offer state-approved regional seminars which pool the best resources of the participating districts.

Refinement of skills in the Phase II program will also be fostered through informal visits by members of the Support Team or other qualified evaluators. Visits must be made by one individual at least once per week during the 10-week period and the responsibility for these informed visits must be divided between at least two but among no more than three persons. In addition, opportunities should be provided for the provisional teacher to observe other experienced teachers in their classrooms. (see Phase III: Assessment)

C. Phase III: Continued Support and Assessment

As noted above, some informal observation (once per week) of the provisional teacher will have begun during Phase II of the program. These classroom visits are intended to be instructive and must be followed by conferences between the observer and the provisional teacher. Ideally, the observers will be persons who are involved in other aspects of the training program.

Also, beginning in Phase II and continuing through the duration of Phase III, there will be a gradual shift in emphasis from the development of the provisional teacher to evaluation for purposes of recommending certification. This evaluation phase is to be conducted by an Evaluation Team of no fewer than two nor more than three persons. These restrictions are intended to insure that more than one perspective will be represented in the evaluation process

while the potential for disruption in the provisional teacher's classroom is limited. In nearly all cases the Evaluation Team will be comprised of two or three members from the Support Team, but other specialized evaluators may serve. If an experienced teacher participates in the observation process, no evaluations are to be conducted by that individual which might have a bearing on the future employment or certification of the provisional teachers. It is the responsibility of the appropriately certified administrator who is chosen to head the team to formulate the final certification recommendation. However, the experienced teacher should provide advice and guidance to the candidate throughout the year.

The evaluation process will be conducted in accord with the following guidelines:

1. Phase II (first 10 weeks)

   a. at least one informal visit per week by one member of the team;

   b. at least two formal observations with pre- and post-conferences, one during the first five weeks and one during the second five weeks; and

c. a formal written evaluation at the end of 10 weeks prepared by the appropriately certified members of the team and shared with the provisional teacher.

2. Phase III (Period beginning after the first 10 weeks and extending to the end of the provisional period)

a. at least one informal visit per month;

b. a minimum of two additional formal observations (no more than two months should pass without an observation occurring); and

c. a final comprehensive evaluation report prepared for submission by the chief school administrator of the employing district to the state to support the certification recommendation.

Visits, observations, and evaluations must emphasize the skills outlined in the Boyer Report as well as related abilities. The final evaluation will be recorded on a standardized form developed by the state. Districts may use their own forms for interim assessment. These must reflect the same criteria upon which the state form will be based. Those criteria will measure the provisional teacher's ability to:

1. identify appropriate student objectives;

2. develop appropriate learning activities;

3. sequence and pace instruction;

4. intersperse questions to check for understanding;

5. provide students with many detailed examples and clear instructions;

6. provide all students with sufficient successful practice;

7. provide opportunities for independent work;

8. present information at levels appropriate to students;

9. exhibit proficiency in the subject matter;

10. assess student achievement (through tests and other means) and provide appropriate feedback to students and parents;

11. manage the classroom for effective learning;

12. deal with individual learning styles and problems;

13. develop educational experiences that provide opportunities for students to develop potential in the areas of decision making, personal/social adjustment, positive self-image, and creativity; and

14. maintain a commitment to continued professional growth.

It is critical that the distinction be maintained between evaluation of the provisional teacher for purposes of future employment and evaluation for purposes of certification. This must be so even though the two evaluation processes share some commonalities. Continuation of employment is a local decision which is made by local school boards. Professional certification, on the other hand, is a state responsibility and places the teacher as a member of the teaching profession in good standing and entitles him/her to serve in any district in the state. The decision to certify belongs legally to a professional licensing board, the State Board of Examiners; and certification recommendations regarding provisional teachers must - by regulation and statute - be submitted by the team chairperson directly to the Secretary of that body and must not be confused with local employment decisions. Employment is conditional subject to the decision regarding certification.

Because provisional teachers will be issued a certificate which is valid throughout the state, a standardized form is required for the final evaluation report which is to be prepared on all provisional teachers and submitted to the Board of Examiners. Therefore, it is recommended that the staff of that Board, with the assistance of consultants, prepare and distribute a standard state form to be used in reporting on the performance of provisional teachers.

The District Plan

As recommended above, districts should be required to submit written plans for their training programs and receive approval by the State Board of Examiners, pursuant to the statutory authority of that Board over any mechanism by which certificates are awarded. Staff of the Board will use generally the procedures by which all programs for training teachers are evaluated and approved. These procedures involve some type of peer review of the written proposal by professionals outside New Jersey and the auditing of certification recommendations and supporting materials. If training programs are to be a part of interstate reciprocal agreements, then periodic on-site state assessment of policies and practices relating directly to the training of provisional teachers also will be required.

A particular district or consortium of districts might submit a plan after deciding to employ a provisional teacher; or the plan may be submitted in advance, approval obtained, and then simply updated at the time a provisional teacher is employed. The Commission recommends that the Department

of Education devise a standardized format and set of guidelines for the development of district plans. However, at minimum, these plans should present the following in sufficient detail to provide a clear understanding of the training program:

A. an identification of all key personnel, including Support Team and Evaluation Team members, and their certifications;

B. syllabi of the formal instruction component and the vitae of those who will provide instruction, except those who are college faculty;

C. an identification of all other supporting resources, including personnel and accessibility of library or other learning materials;

D. a description of all consortial arrangements including identification of district leaders who will serve on the coordinating team;

E. documentation of the agreement of college faculty to participate in the seminar and on the Professional Support Team;

F. description of assessment and observation instruments to be used based upon the proposed standardized criteria.

G. overall timeframes for the essential activities of the three phases of the program;

H. description of the ways in which formal instruction will be integrated with teaching practice.

* * * *

The standards recommended are intended to result in training programs which are of high quality and workable. In particular, the implementation of these programs has the potential to draw together various segments of the professional community - especially college and public school faculty - in addressing the most important task of preparing beginning teachers. The Commission urges all segments of the education profession to seize this opportunity for partnership and cooperation.

In addition, the Commission believes that the concept of the Professional Support Team is a credible, effective and even exciting means by which to assist new teachers in their development. This approach brings a wide range of expertise and perspectives to bear upon the education of the provisional teacher and does so in the context of actual teaching, thereby allowing consideration of the practical needs of the individual.

The state will have to give serious consideration to the means by which district training programs will be supported. Tuition, fees and other sources of support will be identified by the State Board and Department of Education.

Finally, the Commission recommends that the State Department of Education, through some sort of independent panel, study very carefully the programs which districts develop under this plan. It should be assumed that the program will operate conditionally for three years after implementation of the first program. At that time, the State Board of Education should be informed of the extent of its success and should decide upon its continuance and any modifications needed for improvement.

APPENDICES

Charge to the State Internship Panel

Purpose of the State Panel

The State Board of Education is considering the adoption of a new plan for certifying teachers. This plan calls for the continued support and strengthening of traditional college preparation standards and would also allow local districts the option of employing persons who were not education majors in college. In order to be considered for teaching positions, these "alternate" candidates will be required to possess a baccalaureate degree and pass a state test in the appropriate secondary subject field or a test of general knowledge at the elementary level. If such an individual is hired, he/she will be issued a one-year provisional certificate and it will be the responsibility of the local district to provide essential training in an on-the-job internship during the first year of employment. The district will also assess the performance of the provisional teacher and, at the end of one year, provide the state with a positive or negative recommendation for standard certification.

At its December meeting the State Board, by a formal resolution, endorsed the Commissioner of Education's proposal that two panels be convened to assist in designing its structure. The first of these panels was comprised of nationally recognized educational leaders and researchers from various parts of the country. This panel met in Princeton, New Jersey on January 10 and 11, 1984 and its purpose was to define the areas of knowledge

and the teaching skills which are essential for beginning teachers. A copy of the national panel's report is attached and its recommendations will be used in two ways. First, they will be used to formulate minimum standards for the collegiate preparation of new teachers. Colleges themselves will determine the specific mechanisms (e.g., number and types of courses, credit-hours, etc.) by which these recommendations will be implemented.

The recommendations of the national panel also will provide the basis for the training of provisional teachers in district internships. The major purpose of the state panel, for which this charge is intended, is to design the specific means by which knowledge and skills will be conveyed to provisional teachers and their abilities assessed during the internship period for purposes of certification. The recommendations of the state panel will be used to develop minimum standards with which all districts must comply. These standards will replace the existing "emergency" system of employing alternate candidates for teaching jobs.

Assumptions

The state panel is not to debate or comment upon the merits of the certification plan which the Board is considering. The Department and the State Board of Education have created elaborate means by which the plan itself can be discussed and decided upon.

The following are basic premises of the panel's charge:

1. National Panel Report

The state panel should focus its attention on designing the structures through which provisional teachers can acquire the knowledge and skills defined by the national panel. It should function with the knowledge and on the assumption that the Commissioner and the State Board of Education have accepted the report of the national panel.

2. Employment

An essential premise of the state panel's work is that local districts will be able to offer contracts to individuals who hold the baccalaureate degree and who pass the state subject matter test or general test at the elementary level. Although some training may occur before the individual actually begins teaching, (e.g., in the summer), training will not be a prerequisite to the offer of a contract. In addition, these individuals will be hired as teachers who are responsible for classes of students on a full-time basis. Provisional and emergency teachers have always been hired under such terms; the state panel is asked simply to assist in recommending ways in which they might be trained while on the job.

3. District Auspices

It is assumed that the training of provisional teachers will occur

under the auspices of local school districts. Authority for the preparation and certification of school personnel belongs legally to the state. A part of this authority is delegated to colleges in the traditional preparation of teachers and will be delegated to local districts in the case of provisional teachers. This does not preclude the state panel from recommending that other institutions be allowed to provide support to district internships.

4. Purposes of Internships

In preparing their recommendations, the members of the state panel should recognize that the internship is to serve two functions. First, it is to be a means through which provisional teachers acquire training in the knowledge and skill areas recommended by the national panel. Second, it is to be a mechanism by which district personnel, acting on behalf of the state, for purposes of certification, evaluate the provisional teacher's ability to apply knowledge and skills effectively.

It is important to note the distinction which must exist between the certification and employment determinations which districts will make regarding provisional teachers. Certification is a state function and, at the conclusion of each internship, the local district will recommend to the state whether or not a provisional teacher is sufficiently competent to be issued a standard license, valid in any New Jersey district. The decision to continue employing a provisional teacher beyond the first year belongs

solely to the local board of education and is based upon other considerations (e.g., economic) in addition to those of competence. Because certification is a state function, the state must always reserve the right to review the certification recommendations of local districts and colleges, to request additional documentation of candidates' performance, to monitor the training process, and to make the final determination concerning the issuance of certificates.

5. One Year's Duration

The duration of a district internship is assumed to be one year, including the period prior to the time when the provisional teacher actually begins teaching. This amount of time is comparable to, or exceeds, that devoted to professional training in many college preparation programs.

Specific Charge

The state panel should recommend whatever guidelines its members believe will result in an effective internship for provisional teachers, operating within the assumptions listed above. Some specific questions the panel may wish to address are:

1. Should there be a summer or other pre-teaching session for provisional teachers? If so what should be its duration and its focus?

2. Who should be required to supervise provisional teachers? What kinds of supervision should be provided? How frequently should provisional teachers be observed in the initial and latter stages of their training?

3. What kinds of inservice training, if any, should be provided to provisional teachers? How might this be accomplished?

4. What should be the qualifications of those persons who will supervise provisional teachers?

5. What training should be required of, or available to those who will supervise and assist provisional teachers?

6. What criteria/commitments should a district meet in order to be authorized to hire a provisional teacher?

7. What type of documentation should districts be required to forward to the state in support of their recommendation to certify or not certify?

8. What external institutions might districts use in assisting with the training and supervision of provisional teachers? What options should be available to districts?

9. How should districts evaluate the knowledge and skills of provisional teachers?

These questions are not intended to limit the discussions of the panel, and its members are encouraged to consider any relevant issue.

LK/ckb/0173

Attachment

May 2, 1984

To: The Board of Education, State of New Jersey

From: Marcoantonio Lacatena

Re: Commission on Alternative Teacher Certification; Minority Report
Fifth Year Alternative Teacher Certification Proposal

One of the major charges of education is to respond to the everchanging needs of society, and it is the responsibility of the professional educational leaders to assure that such responses are rational, prudent, and in the long-range interests of the society's children whom educators strive to serve.

There are many problems facing our public schools today. Chief among these problems is the inadequate financial support for our public schools resulting in low salaries which cannot attract and hold a sufficient number of potentially good teachers, overcrowded classrooms with high student/teacher classroom ratios, worn and outdated textbooks and facilities, and low teacher morale. In September of 1983, the Governor promised to address the problem of low salaries and morale.

Governor Thomas Kean outlined a "Blueprint for Reform" for New Jersey schools. He offered both long-term and short-term proposals for attracting and retaining the best possible talent into teaching, with the intention of improving instruction for the State's students.

The Governor's proposals were generally received with open-mindedness and with some anticipation, in the hope that the substantive problems of New Jersey's schools were, finally, being addressed.

There were to be a number of specific programs to insure the raising and maintaining of rigorous standards for teachers, covering both entry into and completion of teacher training as well as continuing education once professional training was completed. The design and implementation of the programs were left to the Commissioner of Education, Saul Cooperman.

One of these programs addressed short-term shortages of teachers in certain areas such as mathematics and science by proposing an "alternate route" to certification designed to bring the best and the brightest into the profession quickly, and with rigorous standards of entry.

The State would, under this program, assist local districts to bring starting salaries for all teachers in the state to $18,500 a year. The current average starting salary in New Jersey is about $13,000, which will not attract or keep first-rate teachers when the starting salaries for other professions range from $20,000 to $30,000 a year. The Board should urge the Governor to support the legislation which is necessary to fulfill that part of his program.

The AFT has long pushed for adequate salaries and for improved professional standards, and the New Jersey State Federation of Teachers (NJSFT) encouraged good faith discussion of the proposals among various constituencies, and took part in such discussions, including service on the Commission on Alternative Teacher Certification, established by Commissioner Cooperman.

The panel should have been given more time, further direction, and a broader charge,

to seek the advice of national experts to formulate a program for a genuine, long-lasting program which will attract and keep "the best and the brightest teachers" for the public schools of the state. Stopgap measures and hasty solutions, particularly those which threaten to remove the training of teachers from its intellectual base in higher education, will only make matters worse, in the short and long run.

The Commissioner has offered an alternative route for teacher certification ostensibly for the purpose of raising the standards of classroom instruction and enlarging the pool of quality applicants to the profession. I support the Commissioner's desire for high standards; however, I feel that the proposed plan, in many respects, fails to supply the ingredients needed to bring about the standards it claims to support. Like the Commissioner, I recognize the need for attracting more qualified people to the field, but I wish to do this in a manner which maintains the conceptual background critical to educational decision-making in a democratic society, and reinforces the pedagogical standards necessary to assure excellent performance in challenging classroom situations. Those people who enter the teaching profession must have a strong and extensive general education background and a sound knowledge of their subject-matter discipline as emphasized by the Commissioner, but they must also have a strong professional grasp of the ideological and cultural forces which support or threaten the aims of American education. Equally important, they must attain a thorough training in the latest pedagogical techniques if we are to expect improvements in student achievement and student behavior.

With these basic professional criteria in mind, I offer the following teacher certification proposal which includes the reforms embodied in the September, 1983, revisions of the teacher training regulations which raised standards, and incorporates them into a 'Fifth Year Alternative Teacher Certification Proposal.' This proposal would place the prospective teacher in a public school position after his/her undergraduate career under the guidance of a public school master teacher, as well as the supervision of a college education professor and a college subject matter professor.

Subject matter competency tests, successful completion of a professional sequence of courses, and the recommendation of the public school master teacher, college education professor and college subject matter professor would be required of all interns before the award of permanent certification. The sequence would include a pre-internship summer session, a course during each semester of the internship, and a post-internship session during the following summer. Subject matter competency tests would be required for all interns before the start of their training period in the public schools.

Each college would be responsible for submitting course programs in order to meet the following professional academic criteria consonant with the recommendations of the Boyer report:

1. Familiarity with latest methods of research-validated effective teaching in related subject matter fields, as well as methods dealing with basic skills of reading, writing, and mathematics.

2. Familiarity with latest curricula developments and education strategies for implementing related programs.

3. Awareness of learning theories and measurement and testing skills as they relate to child and adolescent growth, behavior, and academic achievement.

4. Understanding of, and appreciation for, the various philosophic and cultural forces related to American values as they impact upon educational issues, policies, and goals.

5. Awareness of the organizational and management problems of school process and how such process relates to the sociological factors of the community.

6. Understanding of, and appreciation for, the particular educational assets of and difficulties encountered by minority and underprivileged students.

7. Demonstration of classroom skills related to:

   a. student objectives
   b. appropriate learning activities
   c. questioning skills
   d. individual, small group, and large group instruction
   e. classroom management skills.

The following considerations are provided for continued professional development. So that the profession of education can finally gain the image and stature enjoyed by the medical and legal professions, the State of New Jersey must offer the financial aid necessary for local boards to offer comparably higher salaries for experienced teachers. I also recommend that the Board of Education and the Board of Higher Education negotiate with other states to bring certification programs throughout the United States into the five-year professional program in order to put professional training for teachers on a par with those in law and medicine, and to afford a full professional preparation without any competitive complications with liberal arts preparation and subject-matter training.

Should these proposals be accepted by the State Board of Education, the needs of students, parents, professionals, and political leaders would have been met, and all of us could get, once again, to the business of education. It is time to bring these various segments of the population, all of which are sincerely concerned about the future of American education, together in harmony, and I feel that this proposal for teacher certification can significantly contribute toward that end.

Regardless of the program to be adopted, the Board should submit any new proposal for teacher training and certification to a panel of nationally recognized scholars from within the profession and from other areas for evaluation before final adoption. The panel should be jointly selected by the Department of Education, the Department of Higher Education, and the various professional groups which are engaged in teacher training and in the evaluation of teacher training programs. New Jersey's children deserve at least this minimal protection.

Supplemental Report
by Edithe A. Fulton, President, NJEA, on
the Report of the Commission on Alternate Teacher Certification

The Commission on Alternate Teacher Certification has produced a report which recommends a method of attracting outstanding non-traditional candidates that is worth testing for a trial period. The panel's insistence on standards and rigor has produced an alternate route to teacher certification that is far superior to the "emergency" licensing procedure it is intended to replace. The panel has included many elements that build quality and close possible loopholes. These include:

1. Qualifying standards for eligibility to take the State test.

2. High cutoff scores.

3. Professional preparation before the provisional teacher is given charge of a classroom.

4. Suggestions for college participation in the pre-service and post-service professional preparation programs.

5. Strict State standards to permit and govern local-district training.

6. Continuing State monitoring and evaluation of the local-district training.

7. Clear delineation of support-team roles, entirely differentiating collegial assistance from the separate functions of supervision, evaluation, and employment/certification recommendations about the provisional teacher.

8. Mandating extra compensation for extra duties that fall on staff members because of programs for provisional teachers.

9. Inclusion of a "sunset" provision so that, after a three-year trial, the experimental new route to teacher certification can be improved or abandoned as experience dictates.

10. The determinative role assigned to the State Board of Examiners and retention of State control over licensing.

While these elements have produced a plan that's considerably stronger than present alternate licensing procedures, I do not yet feel that I can endorse the Commission report. While I did not oppose its transmission in its present form to the Commissioner, I do believe that it should be strengthened even more before it is enacted. NJEA will continue

to seek the following changes in whatever enabling regulations or permanent procedures are adopted. The final plan should:

1. **Require graduate credit for all professional training -- both pre-service and post-service.** This will insure participation by our colleges and universities. It will also give consistency and legitimacy to the content and quality of instruction offered. Certainly, fees or tuition should not be charged unless valid college credit is given.

2. **Increase the pre-service academic load and decrease the post-service load.** The more professional training the provisional teacher has before actual teaching, the better for the students in the class. NJEA recommends that the completion of 12 college credits (or the equivalent) in **how to teach** and **how students learn** (including practicum) be a prerequisite for issuance of the provisional certificate. Ideally, this training would be given in the summer.

Moreover, the first weeks of teaching are demanding and draining, both physically and psychologically. Beginning teachers typically spend long hours in the afternoon and evening in the assessment of student work and the preparation of lessons. At such a time, the beginning teacher should not be burdened with seminar requirements. Collegial help should be available, but heavy academic requirements should not be imposed. The bulk of the academic requirement should have been completed beforehand.

3. **Eliminate the big loophole in the report -- the provision that would let a school district hire "on short notice" a totally untrained provisional teacher and provide pre-service education during "the first 20 - 30 days on the job."** Hiring of provisional teachers on short notice should not be allowed. Permitting it would wipe out the standards and quality built into the procedure. If abused, it could open the floodgates. Moreover, the first weeks of school are crucial; they determine the tenor and success of the entire year. Beginning teachers should be prepared beforehand and eligible to take full and successful control of the class on the first day of school.

If the state persists in making the mistake of retaining this loophole, it should at least take steps to protect the integrity of the teaching that goes on in affected classrooms during those first 20 to 30 days. Where a district has not hired a regularly certified or properly prepared "provisional" teacher by the opening of school, a member of the support team (i.e. supervisor or administrator) should be assigned initial responsibility for the new teacher's classes during the period of pre-service education. (In almost all districts, supervisors are not required to begin their normal teacher observations and evaluations until December, making them available in emergencies to be assigned to this function.)

4. **Make it clearer that what the beginning teacher needs is help, not harassment.** While the report calls for observations and evaluation, it ignores the penchant of some supervisors to nitpick and harry the supervised. Observations and evaluations should be constructive. Insure assistance, not criticism.

5. **Because so few districts run a full school program in the summer, special State efforts --including incentive funding -- should be made to establish comprehensive centers for pre-service training.** For both educational and social reasons, these special comprehensive summer programs could be in our biggest cities.

With these changes, New Jersey will have a strong system for identifying, recruiting, and training outstanding non-traditional candidates. Public-school children could only benefit.

SIGNED: Edithe A. Fulton

Editne A. Fulton,
President, NJEA
April 27, 1984

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